

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-20

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DRAFTED BY ARA/BC/B:JBINNS

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TO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SGEN, BL

SUBJECT: FLYING SAMARITANS PROJECT FOR BOLIVIA

1. THE FLYING SAMARITANS, A PRIVATE, NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION, HAVE PROPOSED A MEDICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT FOR BOLIVIA WHICH WOULD ENTAIL SENDING A LARGE TEAM OF U.S. PHYSICIANS AND MEDICAL SUPPORT PERSONNEL (AS MA** AS 130 IN STAGGERED VISITS) TO THE COCHABAMBA AREA DURING OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 1973. WE UNDERSTAND GROUP HAS CONTACTED FOLLOWING PERSONS IN CONNECTION WITH PROJECT: MRS. BANZER; MINISTER OF HEALTH LEIGUE; DR. VALLE (IDENTIFIED AS PRESIDENT BANZER'S BROTHER-IN-LAW); RODOLFO CASTEDO; AND PREFECT OF COCHABAMBA.

2. PROJECT ALSO REPORTEDLY INCLUDES (WE ASSUME AS DONATIONS) A LARGE AMOUNT OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT, INCLUDING*ECENTRIFUGES AND USED AMBULANCES,*WHICH REPORTEDLY HAVE BEEN REQUESTED BY THE GOB. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION BEING POUCHED.

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3. THE FLYING SAMARITANS HAVE IN PAST WORKED SUCCESSFULLY

IN MEXICO AND GUATEMALA. IN EARLIER PROJECTS TRANSPORP OF PERSONNEL AND SUPPLIES WAS ACCOMPLISHED BY PRIVATELY-OWNED LIGHT AIRCRAFT, OFTEN FLOWN BY COOPERATING PHYSICIANS.

BECAUSE OF DISTANCE, ALTITUDE AND BULK OF EQUIPMENT INCLUDED, BOLIVIA PROJECT IS CONTINGENT ON FREE TRANSPORTATION FROM COMMERCIAL AIRLINES OR OTHER SOURCES. AT PRESENT, IT DOES NOT SEEM LIKELY THAT SAMARITANS WILL BE ABLE TO OBTAIN FREE TRANSPORTATION NEEDED TO PROCEED WITH PROJECT FROM COMMERCIAL AIRLINES. THEY HAVE ASKED BRANIFF TO PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION FOR PERSONNEL, BUT AS YET BRANIFF HAS NOT SUBMITTED APPLICATION TO PROVIDE FREE PASSAGE TO CAB WHICH BY LAW MUST APPROVE SUCH REQUEST. (FYI BRANIFF VICE PRESIDENT COX HAS ADVISED DEPARTMENT THEY WILL RELUCTANTLY REQUEST 50 FREE PASSAGES IF GOB MAKES FORMAL REQUEST OF BRANIFF. END FYI) IN CASAS WHERE U.S. GOVERNMENT AGENCY REQUESTS FREE TRANSPORTATION BE PROVIDED BY U.S. FLAG CARRIERS, CAB REQUIRES CERTIFICATION THAT FREE TRANSPORTATION IS REQUIRED QUOTE FOR OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS OF PARAMOUNT NATIONAL INTEREST UNQUOTE. DEPARTMENT CRITERIA FOR RECOMMENDING FREE TRANSPORTATION ARE CONTAINED IN 10FAM 521.7. (FYI THE DEPARTMENT, IN RESPONSE TO A CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY, HAS INDICATED IT IS UNABLE TO CERTIFY THAT PROJECT MEETS ESTABLISHED CRITERIA AND IS IN PARAMOUNT NATIONAL INTEREST. END FYI) SAMARITANS ARE ALSO EXPLORING OTHER TRAVEL ALTERNATIVES, SUCH AS THE POSSIBILITY OF USING A PRIVATELY OWNED DC-3, WHICH WOULD ENTAIL SEVERAL MONTHS DELAY.

4. MULLIGAN, FLYING SAMARITANS PROJECT COORDINATOR, ADVISED DEPARTMENT ON OCTOBER 18 THAT HE HAD SENT A CABLE TO BOLIVIA POSTPONING PROJECT. CABLE REPORTEDLY STATES INTER ALIA: QTE ORIGINALLY OUR GOVERNMENT WAS ABLE TO GIVE SPECIAL PERMISSION FOR AIRLINE TO DONATE FREE TRANSPORTATION BECAUSE OF PRESIDENT BANZER'S IMPENDING STATE VISIT TO THE U.S. SINCE VISIT POSTPONED, CLEARANCE IS NO LONGER APPLICABLE. UNQTE. FACTUAL INACCURACY OF FOREGOING WAS POINTED OUT TO MULLIGAN AND FLYING SAMARITANS PRESIDENT DR. DALE HOYT BY DEPARTMENT OFFICER. MULLIGAN AND HOYT AGREED TO SEND A SECOND CABLE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POINTING OUT THAT BRANIFF NEVER ASKED CAB FOR PERMISSION TO DONATE FREE PASSAGE TO FLYING SAMARITANS, THAT U.S. LAW AND REGULATION GENERALLY PROHIBIT AIRLINES FROM GRANTING FREE TRANSPORTATION AND THAT THESE FACTS ARE IN NO WAY RELATED TO BANZER VISIT OR ITS CANCELLATION.

5. DEPARTMENT DOES NOT BELIEVE THE EMBASSY IS REQUIRED TO TAKE ANY ACTION ON THIS MATTER. HOWEVER, IF GOB

OFFICIALS OR MRS. BANZER BROACH THIS SUBJECT, THE EMBASSY
MAY DRAW ON THE ABOVE TO EXPLAIN THE PURELY PRIVATE
NATURE OF THE FLYING SAMARITANS PROJECT. KISSINGER

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